NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

THE bulletin

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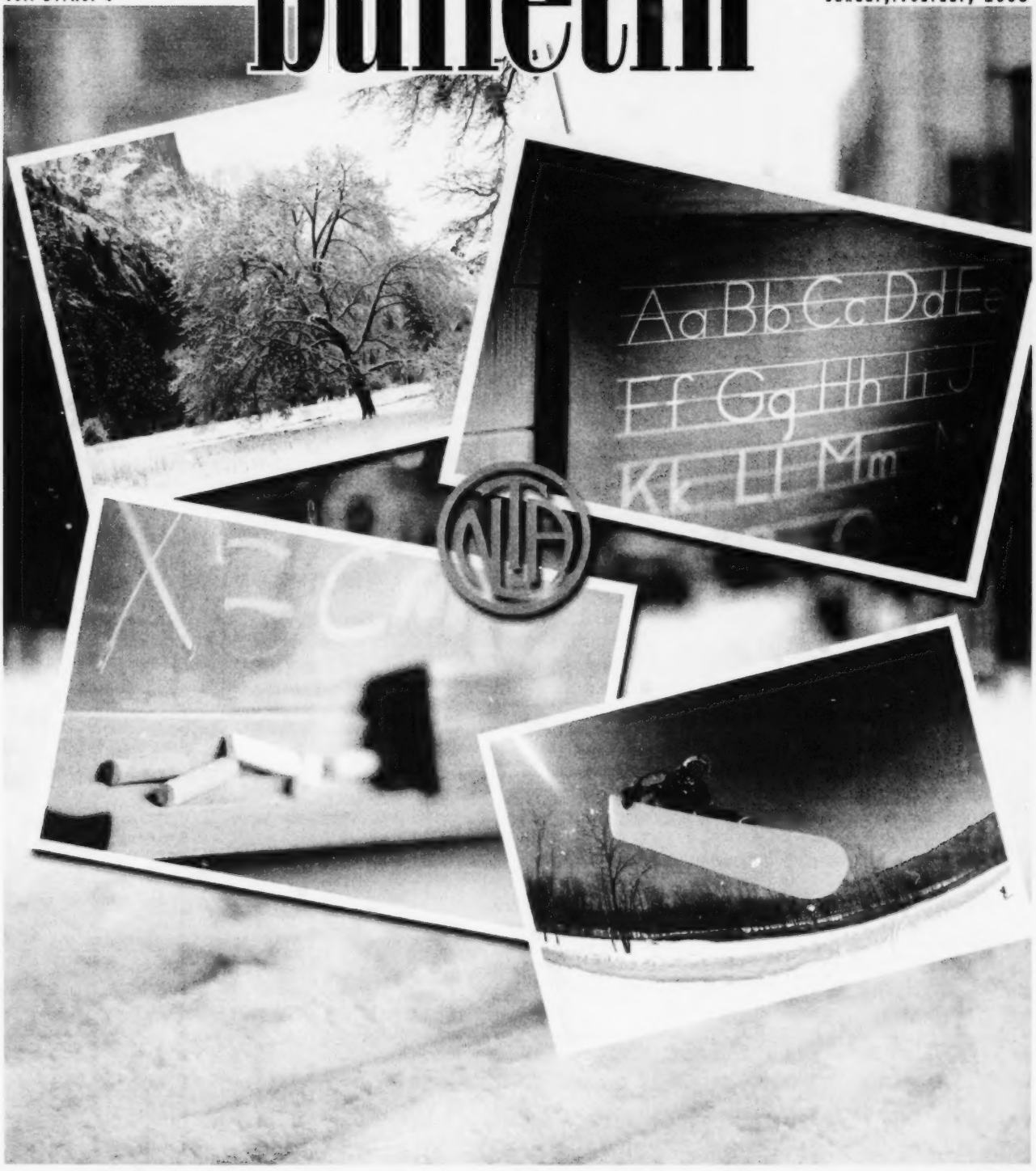
January/February 2008



Up Front from the President

The long awaited and much anticipated release of the first of the two Commission Reports, that of ISSP/Pathways is now in the public domain and in our hands. As you may have gathered from my comments in the media, the report bodes very well for the teachers of this province. Generally, we are very pleased with the direction of the report and your Provincial Executive met in mid-January to prepare a detailed written response to Government on each and every recommendation that is planned for implementation. We want to ensure that the NLTA is there at every step along the way, working with the Department and school districts in order to bring about changes that make the system less cumbersome and less frustrating for teachers and thus more effective for students.

Teacher workload issues, including unnecessary ISSPs and meetings, excessive documentation and re-documentation for categorical students, and alternate course development are but some of the contentious areas that have been addressed positively by the Department of Education. Currently we have close to 7,000 ISSPs in the province for students who require Pathway 2 supports only, almost 50% of the total of all ISSPs in our entire school system. The vast majority of these support plans should now be eliminated and replaced with a simplified documentation process requiring no meetings other than the traditional parent-teacher interview. As well, the completion of the child youth profiles have been suspended indefinitely and new funding for districts and schools for special education resources and testing materials will be provided.

Extension of the approval period for criteria D-G, to a minimum of three years and approval of categorical support for students with profound needs, in particular category C, for the duration of the student's academic life, should relieve special education teachers of much of the unnecessary paperwork and of the uncertainty of "meeting the test" for categorical approval every three years.

Of the seventy out of seventy-five recommendations accepted by Government, some will be implemented immediately, some by the start of the 2008-09 school year, some over the next year to 18 months and others through consultation with other stakeholders as they require further analysis and work. It certainly appears that teachers will see a very significant reduction in paperwork, meetings and unnecessary documentation throughout the entire Pathways system. We will be monitoring all recommendations as they are implemented and working with the Department of Education on many, including those that may have collective bargaining implications.

Close to half of the recommendations that the NLTA made to the Pathways Commission would have positive impact on teacher allocations. Several of the recommendations indicate clear support for the maintenance and possible increase of special education personnel. Ultimately, we will see how they fare when the Report of the Teacher Allocation Review Commission is released by Government. We have consistently said that a new allocation approach, one based on the needs, programs and realities present in schools today, should be the direction to which Government commits itself. We have argued this so that more teachers, both in the classroom and specialist categories, are provided in the system to meet the new demands and expectations that teachers face each and every day. It is justice and logic that come to mind when committing to allocate more classroom and specialist teachers, thus reducing our class sizes, both single and multi-graded. With a marked increase in behavioral and academically challenged students, as well as a much more intensive and extensive curriculum, it is time to truly invest in teachers and education.

As we move towards the negotiations table after the release of the Report on Teacher Allocations and Government's response to same, I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all the very best for a happy and healthy new year. Be sure to take time for yourselves during your busy schedules this winter to rejuvenate from time to time and as John F. Kennedy once said, "The time to repair the roof is when the sun is shining."

In a literal sense, it certainly never hurts to get outdoors when the sun does show itself in our province and in another sense, it may be useful for us all to make "our own weather" and do those things for ourselves and our families, so that we may better balance our personal and professional lives.

The sun is shining on the public treasury as well, so the time to repair the education system is upon us. We remain hopeful and confident that Government will respond positively to all worthwhile recommendations in the allocation report.

Thank you so much for all that you do for your students and colleagues in your school communities and have a great 2008.

Sean

THE
bulletin

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PROVINCIAL/NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

NEWS

CARBONEAR

Carbonear Collegiate hosts Student Leadership Conference

This year's Provincial Student Leadership Conference took place from October 25 to 28, 2007. It was proudly hosted by Carbonear Collegiate students and staff, and was made possible through the support of the Newfoundland Association of Student Activity Advisors (NLASAA). Students, teachers, volunteers, host families, and sponsors all played an integral role in the success of this year's conference, whose theme was *The Spirit Lives*.

The student leadership conference is hosted annually by a different school and is an excellent opportunity for students from all across the province to meet involved, enthusiastic, and dedicated students like themselves. Each year, students and teacher chaperones have lots of fun and get some great ideas to take back to their respective schools.

Students participate in cooperative gaming at the 2007 Provincial Student Leadership Conference.

Louanne Crocker, a student at Carbonear Collegiate, says that with over 350 student leaders present, representing 68 schools, the conference maintained an extremely high level of energy and spirit. Throughout the conference there were appearances by various politicians and school board representatives including Education Minister Joan Burke, Justice Minister Jerome Kennedy, Mr. Darrin Pike, Acting Director of Education for the Eastern School District, and Mr. Fabian Manning, MHA for Avalon.

This year's conference featured keynote speakers Scott Hammell and Alvin Law. Hammell is a magician, escape artist, and motivational speaker. "Mr. Law, also a motivational speaker, is an amazing man and is one of the Thalidomide Babies from the 1960s," says Ms. Crocker. "Having been born without arms, he focused on overcoming adversity and reinforced his message with stories from his own life, making it a truly unforgettable hour for all those present."

Various leadership sessions were offered throughout the weekend and were given by both students and adult volunteers from various areas of the province.

"We would like to say thank you to all who helped make this exciting conference a huge success," concluded Ms. Crocker. "We could not have done it without you!"

MOUNT PEARL

Character counts at Mount Pearl Intermediate

As with many schools in the province, Mount Pearl Intermediate has implemented a "Character Counts" program in their school. The program invites students and staff to create a positive school environment where all can feel safe and respected. This program also promotes an atmosphere of acceptance, trust and responsibility for others.

While planning this project, the committee was presented with the challenge of looking for a unique idea to transform the physical building in such a way that their determination and commitment to the Character Counts program would be reflected. "Posters, murals, banners and displays were created but still, our efforts lacked the *Wow* factor we were looking for," explains Dawn Butler, Music and Learning Resources Teacher at Mount Pearl Intermediate.

Considering that Mount Pearl Intermediate was a small community within the larger community of Mount Pearl, it was decided to designate the hallways and corridors as friendly areas by using street signs. When approached, one of the school council members took on the task of creating the street signs. Each sign cost about $15 including the wall-mounting brackets. "We used the size and design of the signs on Mount Pearl streets, but changed the colour, adding our school crest and new 'street' names. The signs have made a huge impact on how our school looks and feels," says Ms. Butler.

The placement of signs was very specific. For example, high traffic areas, like the main circular hallway, are now referred to as 'Citizenship Circle'. The area outside the main office is now called 'Integrity Intersection'. Twenty signs have currently been mounted with plans for at least ten more to complete the 'community'.

Suggestions for signage included: Leadership Lane; Caring Crescent; Citizenship Circle; Fairness Freeway; Respect Road; Responsibility Way; Honesty Highway; Pride Place; Good Judgement Junction; Trustworthiness Trail; Integrity Intersection; Courtesy Court; Adversity Avenue; Perseverance Path; Friendship Freeway; Kindness Cul de Sac; Self Discipline Drive; Co-operation Corner; Loyalty Lane; and Courage Crescent.

"The overall response from our grade 5-9 students, staff, parents and visitors has been overwhelmingly positive. This idea has definitely made a bold statement to everyone concerned. The message is clear: Character Counts at Mount Pearl Intermediate."

The Citizenship Circle sign hangs in the main hallway of Mount Pearl Intermediate.

The Ella Manuel Award for 2008

The Ella Manuel Award is being offered in 2008 to assist a young woman from Newfoundland and Labrador to further her education in environmental and social issues. Valued at $2000.00, the award is in memory of Ella Manuel, Newfoundland writer, broadcaster, feminist and peace activist.

Applicants expecting to graduate this year from high schools in Newfoundland and Labrador are asked to submit through their school principal a two-page essay (1,000 words maximum) describing how their interests and ambitions relate to environmental and social issues in their communities. This must be accompanied by a letter of recommendation from the principal, including a school phone number in case additional information should be required.

The principal's letter should describe the applicant's academic record and general qualifications, such as leadership capacity and interest in environmental and community issues and should give an indication of financial need. Copies of the transcripts of marks for Levels I, II and III are also required. Only one application from each school will be accepted. Preference may be given to applicants from rural areas.

Completed applications must be received by **April 1, 2008** and sent to:

Professional Development Division
Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association
3 Kenmount Road, St. John's, NL A1B 1W1
Fax: 726-3223 or toll free 1-877-711-6582

POUCH COVE

Students learn first aid and safety awareness

On December 6, 2007 the Grade 4 students at Cape St. Francis Elementary School in Pouch Cove successfully completed the St. John Ambulance, "We Can Help" program. This is a First Aid and Safety awareness program designed for students aged 7-10. Each lesson takes 15 to 30 minutes and is designed for delivery by teachers who are certified in Emergency First Aid. Mr. Glenn Barry, Guidance Counselor who is certified by St. John Ambulance in Emergency First Aid, taught the program.

The objectives of the program are: to introduce students to basic first aid; to make students aware of the importance of safety and to encourage them to develop safety habits for life; and to teach students that they can help others as well as themselves – that they do not have to rely solely on adults. This realization is a major step in the development of their sense of individual and social responsibility and self-worth. Students are also encouraged to identify situations that they cannot handle on their own and are taught where and how to get help they need.

The following lessons were taught to the Grade 4 students: First Aid and Safety Awareness; Breathing Emergencies/Artificial Respiration; Choking; Unconsciousness/Recovery Position; Bleeding and Bandaging; Poisoning; Sprains and Fractures; Head, Neck and Back Injury; Frostbite and Burns.

Grade 4 students at Cape St. Francis Elementary proudly display their "We Can Help" certificates.

Each Grade 4 student earned a "We Can Help" certificate from St. John Ambulance as well as a "We Can Help" First Aid Button and a Wallet First Aid Kit, which were presented at the Student of the Month school assembly on December 6. Mr. Barry also provided a PowerPoint presentation about the "We Can Help" program for all students, teachers and parents who attended the awards ceremony.

Further information about this St. John Ambulance program can be obtained by visiting the school's Guidance Department web page and going to the First Aid Skills link: http://mail.esdnl.ca/~glenn_barry.

WHITBOURNE

Youth Centre commemorates Remembrance Day

On November 8, 2007, the NL Youth Centre at Whitbourne held its annual Remembrance Day Commemoration. "This is a very important day for the Centre, and our students do research, watch films, and prepare posters, poems, or short stories for submission to be judged for placement, first at the Centre, and secondly at the local Legion Level," says Principal George Day. Students also prepare and participate in readings on the day of the Ceremony.

Mr. Day says they are pleased that for 10 years now the Prince of Wales Chamber Choir, under the direction of Mr. Terry Howlett, has provided music, and Terry the trumpet solo for the Last Post. Guests included Veterans and Legion members, representatives from the RNC, the RCMP, the Canadian Military, and local clergy. "We were pleased to welcome our new NLTA President, Sean Noah, as well as guests from the Department of Justice, Child Youth Advocates Office, and the local elementary school principal. This year we were very pleased to welcome the Minister of Education, the Honourable Joan Burke, and local MHA, Felix Collins."

Invited guests at the NL Youth Centre Remembrance Day Commemoration.

After the Ceremony, all guests were treated to a reception prepared by the Centre's kitchen staff. Minister Burke and the NLTA President then had a tour of the facility.

One of the special yearly events is the men from the Canadian Military staying on to participate in a floor hockey game with the students. Mr. Day says

this is a great time for the students who look forward to "the game" each year and this event has also become a special part of the day for the last 10 years.

"We are so thankful to all the people who participate and assist in any way to make this such a special and important day for our Centre," concluded Mr. Day.

ST. JOHN'S

Educating students about bullying

Bullying Awareness Week, November 18 to 24, was a busy week at Macdonald Drive Junior High in St. John's with many activities to educate students about bullying. The theme was *Stand Up To Bullying* and activities included a people peace train, an anti-bullying pledge wall, a poster display, origami peace cranes, the Random Acts of Kindness Picture Wall, peace songs on the P.A. to begin and end each day and a friendly volleyball game between the students and teachers.

The finale to the week was the making of a People Peace Symbol on the soccer field beside the school. Students and staff were joined in the making of their peace symbol by Holly O'Neill. Ms. O'Neill was recently showcased in *The Telegram* and on NTV as a bully who has come forward to express regret for the damage she caused to those she had bullied. Joan McCue, School Counselor at Macdonald Drive Junior High, says Ms. O'Neill's message to our students was very strong and she stressed the importance of respect, particularly respect for each other's differences. "The week was a huge success and can be attested by the positive comments of the students," concluded Ms. McCue.

Students at Macdonald Drive Junior High form a human peace sign on the school's soccer field during Bullying Awareness Week.

Students share love of animals through Animal Wellness Club

Jan Smith, teacher sponsor, founded the Mount Pearl Animal Rights Club more than 10 years ago. The Club has cared for many abandoned pets, including over 12 turtles, a hedgehog, many bunnies, rats, guinea pigs and hamsters. Most have eventually found caring homes outside the school. The Mission Statement written by student members of MPSH Animal Rights Club states that the purpose of the Animal Rights Club is "to provide students with a place to share their love of animals while increasing their understanding and knowledge of our fellow creatures. We encourage students to find ways to educate others in the humane treatment of all life forms, and to themselves work in various ways to make life better for those who are mistreated by human society."

Inspired by Mrs. Janet Smith's Animal Rights Club, students at Macdonald Drive Junior High School, under the guidance of teacher Gail Kelly, started their first ever Animal Wellness Club. Members have raised money through bake sales, donations, and other fundraisers to purchase 10 mops and 235 liters of Javex for the SPCA. The SPCA needs Javex in order to clean out the dog runs outside, scour the cat and dog cages, mop the floor, etc. They need to do this multiple times a day to prevent the spread of the deadly provirus.

Mayor Andy Wells visited Macdonald Drive Junior High's Animal Wellness Club in December. He spoke with the students about the importance of properly caring for pets, especially dogs. He also addressed how to create a safe environment for your pet during the winter months. He shared personal stories of his own pets and showed the students pictures of his three dogs.

St. John's Mayor Andy Wells is presented with blankets for the St. John's Humane Society.

At the end of the visit, members of the Animal Wellness Club presented Mayor Wells with five boxes of blankets for the St. John's Humane Services Society that they had collected throughout the month of December at school. One of the main plans for the New Year is to make more people aware of the need to protect their pets, particularly during the winter months.

Peer Leaders take part in Janeway Christmas concert

The Mobile Peer Leaders are a group of Senior High students from Mobile Central High who take on a leadership role in the school. They organize various activities or receive leadership training during the course of the year. There are two supervising staff – Jackie Taylor-Myles, Guidance Counselor and Krista Galgay, Special Education teacher at Mobile Central High. Their role is to oversee the group as opposed to running it.

Earlier this year, as in most years, the Mobile Peer Leaders organized a Career Fair. Representatives from various schools, as well as individuals, visited the school to discuss post-secondary options. They also receive or organize in-services such as breast cancer awareness, a visit from the Liver Foundation this year to inform students of the dangers of Hepatitis as well as a visit with representatives from Alcoholics Anonymous and the Victorian Order of Nurses in the past. The activities vary every year depending on the interests of the students involved.

Mobile Central High Peer Leaders perform "The Night Before Christmas" at the annual Janeway Christmas concert.

The Peer Leaders also organize fundraising activities for very specific projects. This year they raised almost $150 for the local Happy Tree. They have also helped out with fundraisers for the Challenging Needs students. Four years ago a student who spent a lot of time at The Janeway arranged for the Peer Leaders to take part in The Janeway Christmas concert. This was the beginning of an annual event for the group. The girl who organized the first trip to The Janeway graduated in June, but this year the Peer Leaders continued the tradition even though she had graduated.

This year saw the largest group ever attend the Janeway concert with 23 Peer Leaders taking part. They decided themselves to read *The Night Before Christmas* and act it out and got together during lunch times to practice. "I believe they thought it was something familiar to all kids and could be prepared fairly easily," says Ms. Taylor-Myles. "They were very excited about taking part and proud that they could have the opportunity to put a smile on the faces of the sick children."

NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

NLTA Scholarship Awarded

Nicole Dalley of Churchill Falls has been named 2007-08 recipient of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association Scholarship. Nicole is currently completing a Bachelor of Education degree (Primary/Elementary) from Memorial University. She completed her internship at Eric G. Lambert School in Churchill Falls this past December.

The NLTA Scholarship is awarded annually on the basis of academic excellence and character to a senior student enrolled in the Faculty of Education. The scholarship, valued at $700, is awarded annually by the MUN Senate Committee on Scholarships, acting on the recommendation of the Dean of Education.

OTTAWA

Kiwanis Read-a-thon

The Kiwanis Club of Ottawa's innovative literacy improvement project is available free to your school or organization regardless of location in the world.

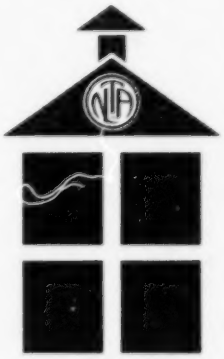
The Read-a-thon is a stand alone non-competitive program implemented at your convenience any time of the year. It is designed to encourage children to become better readers by reading more often, trying out new books, and having fun doing it.

Simply visit their website (www.kiwanisreada-thon.org) to register on-line to receive access to the free on-line teacher's tool-kit with teacher-tested and approved materials that will help you launch and implement a Read-a-thon.

(continued on page 10)

Education Week 2008
March 2-8

Learn... Respect... Grow
J'apprends... je respect... je m'épanouis



Further information and resource materials will be forwarded to schools as soon as they become available.

The toolkit includes an implementation checklist, backpack handouts, reading records, classroom and school-wide activities and more.

Kiwanis is proud to be able to help schools around the world implement their literacy initiatives. Kiwanis wants nothing in return. If you use the Read-a-thon as a fundraiser you keep 100% of the funds raised.

COLOMBIE-BRITANNIQUE

Les professeurs d'immersion en Colombie-Britannique

Les 19 et 20 octobre dernier, 14 enseignants et enseignantes du conseil scolaire Eastern ont assisté au congrès de l'ACPI (l'Association canadienne des professeurs d'immersion)/l'APPIPC (l'Association provincial des professeurs d'immersion et du programme cadre) à Richmond, en Colombie Britannique.

Grâce à une subvention des programmes de langues du ministère de l'éducation, ces 14 professeurs ont pu assister à des ateliers tels que « Stratégies de littératie intégrées : pour rejoindre la diversité de nos apprenants », « Danse folklorique à l'élémentaire » et « Succès en maths pour tous : questions ouvertes et tâches au choix », parmi d'autres. Aussi, pendant le congrès, le groupe a eu le grand plaisir d'entendre de grands noms dans le monde de l'immersion et de la francophonie. Monsieur Yves Nadon, enseignant en 1e année, auteur de plusieurs albums pour enfants ainsi que des livres au sujet de l'enseignement en contexte immersif et animateur sans égal, a su régaler l'auditoire avec des histoires de ses expériences en salle de classe. Il a aussi lu des albums (les siens et d'autres auteurs) tout en donnant des exemples de comment on peut exploiter certains livres pour atteindre les besoins différenciés de nos jeunes lecteurs/lectrices.

Monsieur Jean-Benoît Nadeau, auteur d'œuvres tels « Les Français aussi ont un accent » et « The Story of French » a donné un atelier soulignant les grandes lignes de comment notre pays est devenu le pays bilingue que l'on connaît aujourd'hui.

Lors du congrès, les enseignant.e.s ont pu visiter la 'rue des exposants', où les maisons d'édition exposaient les toutes dernières publications pour les élèves et les enseignant.e.s en immersion. Pour ceux et celles qui doivent chercher dans des catalogues avant de faire des commandes, l'occasion de voir les nouveautés ne manque pas de valeur.

Le dîner concert, une soirée pour se détendre et profiter des sages conseils de Monsieur Graham Fraser, Commissaire aux langues officielles, fut un grand succès grâce en partie du repas délicieux mais aussi grâce aux sons métissés de « Soir de semaine », un groupe francophone provenant de Whitehorse, au Yukon. Leur mélange de musique folk, funk, rock et reggae a su envoyer aux professeurs le message que notre pays en est un où la dualité linguistique est une réalité!

Monsieur André Obadia, fondateur de l'ACPI malheureusement décédé au mois de mai dernier, n'aurait pu prévoir le succès d'un réseau pour les professeurs qui œuvrent en immersion. Créer une équipe de ceux et celles qui se battent pour promouvoir l'éducation en français, il a hissé une première voile en 1977 – ce qui fait un 30e anniversaire de l'ACPI cette année. L'Association canadienne des professeurs d'immersion a un congrès annuel dans des villes différentes chaque année. Venez nombreux à Ottawa en novembre prochain! Pour de plus amples détails, visitez le site www.acpi-cait.ca.

Les professeurs du conseil scolaire Eastern au congrès de l'ACPI/l'APPIPC.

CANADA

Mission Nutrition resources reflect new Canada's Food Guide

The Mission Nutrition program, brought to you by the Registered Dietitians at Kellogg Canada, is pleased to announce that all of the Mission Nutrition resources have been updated to reflect the new Canada's Food Guide.

Free and easy to access at www.missionnutrition.ca, the program includes ready-to-use lesson plans, fun student activities, curriculum connections, teacher notes, assessment rubrics and family activities. These fun and engaging resources can be used to teach healthy eating, active living, and positive self-esteem.

Developed by Canadian dietitians, with input from teachers and leading health experts, the Mission Nutrition resources meet curriculum expectations in Health, Physical Education, Language, Math, Art, Social Studies, Science and IT. All resources are available in English and French.

WILLIAM JUNIOR BURRY, 1945 - 2007

William Junior Burry, Hare Bay, NL – died April 6, 2007 after courageously battling pancreatic cancer for nearly two years.

Bill began his teaching career in Springdale at the youthful age of eighteen years and except for working summers in British Columbia and Baie Verte on geological surveys, his career was dedicated to the improvement and advancement of education in Newfoundland and Labrador. After Springdale, Bill continued his teaching career in Baie Verte, Carmanville, and Hare Bay-Dover, finishing as principal of Bayview Academy in Gambo.

Teaching was Bill's vocation to which he tirelessly gave his time, effort and dedication, but his pursuit of opportunities to improve the community in which he lived was also remarkable. He thoroughly believed in the brotherhood of man but he also believed that we have a responsibility at the community level to improve the life of all our citizens, especially those who are in need of greater care and this ideal he pursued relentlessly. Bill was leader of Hare Bay-Dover Air Cadets for many years where he worked with his students providing them opportunities for personal and social growth.

Bill was a member of the Lion's Club of Hare Bay-Dover providing leadership at all levels, serving as District Governor of 41S2 and represented this District at many international conferences. He was acknowledged for this service by many outstanding awards over the span of his Lion's career.

In addition to his many other community involvements, Bill was an active member of the Knox United Church, providing leadership at the community level and assisting in church services when asked to do so.

But above all, Bill loved the out-of-doors – he believed like Wordsworth that "nature never did betray the heart that loved her" and to the end of his days, he continued to walk the byways and pathways of his beloved hillsides, boglands and river valleys, relishing in the delights of nature that gave him so much contentment and happiness. His greatest hobby was salmon fishing and his knowledge of this sport was legendary – he just knew. He just knew a lot of things – and was so many things to his friends, to his community, to his family. Bill provided love, hope and inspiration to all who knew him.

His brothers and sisters of both families, especially his nephews and nieces who thought so much of him for his positive support and encouragement, sadly miss their Uncle Bill.

Bill is and will always be sadly missed by his wife Margaret, his son Michael (Melissa), daughter Joanne (Troy), and grandchildren, Benjamin and Allison, whom he loved dearly.

(Submitted by Eric Burry on behalf of the Burry and Rodger families.)

William Junior Burry

HERBERT J. ROACH, 1937 - 2007

Herbert J. Roach was born on June 11, 1937 and received his early education in the two-room Anglican School in his hometown of Coley's Point. After attending probationer summer school in 1954 he began his teaching career at age 17 in Jerseyside, Placentia Bay.

Herb attended MUN in 1955-56 and then taught at Shearstown Elementary, Upper Gullies and Spaniard's Bay. In 1958 he met Marie Hiscock, a co-teacher at Spaniard's Bay Elementary, who became the love of his life and they were married in 1960.

Herb then returned to MUN and graduated in 1964 with a B.Ed. and B.P.E. (Herb was a member of the first graduating class from MUN with a B.P.E. degree.)

For the next 10 years Herb was the Physical Education teacher at Ascension Collegiate in Bay Roberts where he coached hockey, volleyball and badminton. During that time he also continued his studies at MUN and graduated with a Masters diploma in Administration in 1970.

In 1974 he accepted the position of Physical Education Coordinator with the Avalon Consolidated School Board where he worked until his retirement in 1989.

Throughout his teaching career and his retirement Herb displayed a strong competitive spirit, a passionate love for music and a smile and friendly greeting for all. During his retirement years he was active in his church and spent many hours teaching bridge to seniors at the Mews Centre.

His two daughters, Jo-Anne and Lori, have followed in their parents' footsteps and both are proud members of the teaching profession.

Two years ago Herb was diagnosed with ALS and accepted that challenge in the same way he faced life – with courage, with faith, and with dignity.

Herb passed quietly away on Friday morning, December 28, 2007 in the presence of his wife and family. He left behind the legacy of a successful teaching career and many who will miss his exemplary life of Christian living, his pleasant disposition and his 'music and friends'.

"May he rest in peace and may light perpetual shine upon him."

(Submitted by Myrle Vokey.)

Herbert J. Roach

Canadian Public Supports Education and Teachers

by EDWARD HANCOCK

A recent study of public attitudes toward education in Canada indicates that support for public education remains high among Canadians, especially in comparison to other institutions. A recent study entitled *Public Education in Canada: Facts, Trends and Attitudes* was commissioned by the Canadian Education Association (CEA) and released in late November 2007. The study reports a strong level of public support for education and the teaching profession and, according to Canadian Teachers' Federation President Emily Noble, it corroborates the findings of CTF's own public opinion polls in recent years.

The study reported that Canadians in all regions share a high level of satisfaction with the jobs teachers are doing in elementary and secondary schools. Seventy percent of Canadians responded that they are very or somewhat satisfied with the jobs teachers are doing, but this figure was significantly higher in the Atlantic (78%) and Prairie (76%) provinces.

The study also showed a significant similarity of views held by adults with children currently enrolled in school and those who did not. The results contradict the perception often held that adults without children in school tend to hold different views and have lower levels of commitment to public education.

The study also reported that satisfaction with schools is generally high across Canada. When asked to give their community schools a grade from A to F, nearly half of the respondents chose an A or a B (A – 6%; B – 42%). A further one-third of respondents feel their local schools deserve a C grade. Since the CEA first started asking Canadians to grade their local schools in 1979, the majority of Canadians (between 65% and 75%) have consistently judged the quality of schools in their community as average (C) or above average (B) for the past 28 years. Canadians were also asked about their overall satisfaction with their local schools and school systems. The report notes that when compared with the results of earlier CEA surveys, satisfaction levels have generally improved in the past 15 years with 60% of Canadians reporting in 2007 that they are very or somewhat satisfied with their school systems in general.

Public opinion concerning student assessment was also a part of the survey. While there is strong public support (77%) across the country for province-wide high school graduation exams, a clear majority of respondents (60%) believe that teacher assessments should continue to be the source of high school grades. These two results were much closer in Atlantic Canada, with 71% agreeing that high school students should be assessed using province-wide tests while 69% felt that high school grades should mainly reflect teachers' assessments.

"The public supports our teachers and the work they are doing, and clearly supports the need for increased government spending on education."

Canadians' views on the extent and direction of educational change were also explored in the study, with respondents in all regions being largely divided on the scale and direction of provincial governments' attempts to change schools. Few Canadians (20%) rate approaches to change as "about right" with 33% believing there have been too many changes and 40% believing there have been too few over the last decade. In relation to the perceived success of such change, 38% are uncertain, 33% believe changes have been somewhat successful, and 18% rate it as somewhat unsuccessful.

Although divided on the perceived success of educational change, a majority of Canadians believe that the quality of education has either improved or remained the same over the past 10 years. The opinions were similar for elementary (34% – improved a little or a lot, 27% – remained the same) and for high school (28% – improved, 30% – remained the same).

An important conclusion of the study was that "Canadians share a strong commitment to public education". This commitment is revealed in the tremendous level of support for increased government spending on elementary and secondary schools. Almost three-quarters (72%) of Canadians believe provincial governments should be directing more financial resources to public schools. The greatest support for increased government spending on education was found in the Atlantic provinces, with 80% of respondents supporting increased spending. (This figure certainly is in accordance with the results of an NLTA survey in March 2007 which showed that 88% of adults in Newfoundland and Labrador, and 100% of adults with school-aged children, agree with increased funding for education.) Further, supporting the call for increased spending on education, a majority of Canadians outside Quebec expressed a willingness to pay more taxes to support increased funding to schools. The Atlantic provinces' result on this question was 63%. When this data is compared to results of the 1984 CEA study, the authors conclude that a national shift in attitudes toward taxes for education is revealed; noting that "Canadians are considerably more likely to say they are willing to pay more taxes for education today than they were 22 years ago". Further, they conclude that this finding "can be taken to challenge political claims that a majority of Canadians are in favor of tax cuts, at least as far as education is concerned".

Teachers in this province, and indeed throughout the country, should be pleased with the results of this survey showing the high degree of public satisfaction with teachers and public support for education. The public supports our teachers and the work they are doing, and clearly supports the need for increased government spending on education. This level of public support and satisfaction is indeed heartening as teachers and their Association continue to work hard to face the many challenges confronting our public education system today.

Edward Hancock is Executive Director of the NLTA.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Are NLTA Group Insurance premiums going to increase this year?

A. There will likely be some premium rate increases effective April 1, 2008 as dictated by NLTA teacher claims experience.

Every year the NLTA Group Insurance Trustees, all of whom are teachers and members of the plan must partake in an annual renewal of all insurance options with the various insurance companies underwriting the NLTA Group Insurance Program. The premium effective date is April 1, and it is the first pay period in April that premium changes will take effect.

As a result of all of the insurance plan options being put to market tender last year, a significant change in insurance carriers occurred. Premium rates were reduced in Basic Life, Post 65 Retiree Life, Voluntary Life, Basic Accidental Death and Dismemberment, and Voluntary Accidental Death and Dismemberment. Rates were maintained for Long Term Disability and Dental insurance. Health premiums rose by three percent (3%). There were also two-year rate guarantees provided for some of these options, resulting in no change in premium rate anticipated for Voluntary Life, Basic Accidental Death and Dismemberment, Voluntary Accidental Death and Dismemberment, and Long Term Disability.

For the Basic Life, Retiree Life, Health, and Dental plans detailed analysis of claims experience over the past year and anticipated claims for the April 1, 2008 to March 31, 2009 deduction period will occur. Based on this analysis, premium rates will have to be adjusted to provide sufficient revenue to pay teacher claims. Based on preliminary analysis of the claims experience, it appears a small increase in Dental premium rates will be required and a moderate increase in Basic Life premium rates and Health premium rates is anticipated. Trustees anticipate communicating details of any changes effective April 1, 2008 to teachers via home mail by mid to late March.

Q. Does government contribute to the NLTA insurance premiums?

A. Government pays a portion of the Basic Life, Basic Accidental Death and Dismemberment, and Health premium rates for replacement teachers, under contract teachers and retired teachers on pension. Substitute teachers and teachers on unpaid leave (except maternity leave) receive no Government contribution to premium. Teachers pay 100% of the premium rate for all other plan options.

The specific amount of Government contribution is determined each year according to a rate setting process outlined in the Collective Agreement. Government contributes the lesser of 50 percent of the NLTA rate or the Government rate as determined by an independent insurance consultant. Government currently contributes approximately 50 percent of the total premium for the three plan options previously mentioned. Actual Government contribution rates for 2008-09 will be determined by mid-March and communicated to teachers via memorandum.

Q. How can teachers get input or suggest changes to the level of benefits available to teachers?

A. Changes in benefit level typically occur at the time of the annual renewal of the insurance policies. An effective procedure for requesting a benefit change is by bringing a motion to an NLTA Branch to have the Trustees consider the requested benefit change. Such motions can be discussed and debated at a Joint Council Meeting of Branch Presidents and Provincial Executive or at the NLTA Biennial General Meeting. These debates and discussions are an effective means of providing NLTA Group Insurance Trustees with direction from teachers.

This information has been prepared by Don Ash. For information on these topics or other areas of Benefits and Economic Services, please contact any of the following: Lloyd Hobbs, ext. 230, Don Ash, ext. 231, Perry Downey, ext. 226 or Stefanie Tuff, ext. 232.

Thinking About Retirement?

Under the Teachers' Pension Act, a teacher is eligible for pension benefit:
(a) At age 60 with between five and 24 years of pensionable service.
(b) At age 55 or after with at least 25 years of pensionable service.
(c) After completing thirty years of worked service* regardless of age.
(d) Reduced pension with twenty-nine years of worked service and at least thirty years of pensionable service. Pension will be reduced based on the number of months a teacher will be retired prior to reaching age 55.
(* Worked service refers to all pensionable service except university study buy-back that could be purchased prior to 1991.)

VTC Access to Pension Estimator

Teachers now have access to a pension estimator through the main page of the Virtual Teacher Centre (VTC) at www.virtualteachercentre.ca. Teachers can go on-line and using their pension benefit statement, input their salary information and obtain an estimate of their expected pension at the chosen point of retirement. As well, there is a web site dedicated to the Teachers' Pension Plan under the government site at www.fin.gov.nl.ca/fin/pensions/tpp1.asp.

Checklist for Retiring Teachers

The following checklist is designed to assist teachers as they participate and plan for this upcoming life phase change.

❒ Apply to NLTA to attend a Pre-Retirement Seminar up to two years prior to your year of retirement.
❒ Confirm the eligible date of your retirement with the Pensions Division at the pre-retirement seminar or by contacting Pensions Division.
❒ Submit your resignation to School Board (**do not** resign until eligibility has been confirmed): one month notice is required if retirement is to occur before Christmas; three months notice (March 31) is required if retirement is to occur after Christmas.
❒ Apply for Teachers' Pension by completing the appropriate *Teachers' Pension Application.*
❒ Complete the *Direct Deposit Form* and submit to Pensions Division.
❒ Apply for Severance Pay by completing the *Severance Payment Request Form.*
❒ Confirm/consult with Johnson Incorporated on Group Insurance coverage, 1-800-563-1528.
❒ Consider joining the Retired Teachers' Association by completing the application form and submitting it to the Pensions Division.
❒ Consider seeking personal financial advice regarding financial decisions related to retirement.
❒ Keep your mind active and your body healthy. Enjoy life!

Changes Effective Upon Retirement

- NLTA Membership status changes from Active Membership to Life or Associate Membership.
- Access to the services and benefits of the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) terminates.
- Basic Life Insurance coverage reduces to twice annual pension from twice annual salary (provided coverage is maintained and premiums paid), terminates at age 65, and is replaced by a members only $15,000 benefit after age 65.
- Eligibility for EI ceases (unless a person becomes a "re-established worker" or is on a forced medical retirement).

Any questions or comments can be directed to an Administrative Officer in the Benefits and Economic Services Division of NLTA.

Managing Your Energy

by MARIE WALL

If you often think you need more hours in the day, a new approach may be needed. Learn to equip yourself to be more balanced and productive at work, and more relaxed at home. In *The Power of Full Engagement*, Tony Schwartz and Jim Loeher have co-opted methods used with athletes to enhance performance for people from all walks of life. The power of full engagement focuses on building and renewing one's energy to enhance performance and have meaning in your life. According to the authors, energy is a capacity to work; high-positive energy is productive and efficient, allowing you to complete projects in a timely manner and providing you with more time to attend to the other meaningful life tasks. The four elements of personal energy are body, emotions, mind and spirit. Having healthy behaviours that enhance each of these aspects provide that high-positive energy. Creating rituals that make the behaviours integral to your day and your life will bring you into "the zone" you want.

Living in "The Zone"

Take a moment to consider personal energy on two axis – high-low and positive-negative. Each quadrant is an energy zone: high-positive is productive; high-negative is survival; low-negative is burnout and low-positive is recovery. Athletes are always striving to be in "the zone"; productive, positive and focused. In order to achieve "the zone" they will do very specific behaviours and rituals to accomplish their goal. While it is unrealistic to believe someone can be in high-positive all the time, there are definitely ways to create this full engagement as the most predominate zone for your life. Using intermittent renewal as a way to recover from high demands ensures more energetic, focused action. This can be true for any person in any walk of life, not just athletes. It is time to take back control of your life, to become more fully engaged on and off the job, allowing you to do more in less time with greater satisfaction.

Engaging the Body: Physical Energy

According to Schwartz and Loeher, physical engagement means that employees have sufficient energy reserves to meet the demands they face. It is widely known that adequate sleep, good nutrition, and daily exercise enhance one's ability to function well, yet knowing this is not enough. With the demands of work and home, many teachers do not prioritize their health and the consequence is felt in every aspect of their lives. The key is not to wait until you have the time to take care of these things, but to create daily rituals for building and renewing energy.

Consistent practice of healthy behaviours is counterintuitive for high demanding institutions and our extroverted culture. Schwartz says, "To recharge themselves, individuals need to recognize the costs of energy depleting behaviours and then take responsibility for changing them, regardless of the circumstances." Scheduling a bedtime that allows you seven to eight hours sleep per night is one of the most critical requirements to high functioning. "Strategic eating" means we plan for and eat healthy meals including breakfast. Eating smaller meals throughout the day is thought to be better for sustaining energy than a couple of large meals that will promote overeating and erratic energy levels. Being your best physically is the foundation for all engagement.

Engaging the Emotions: Connection

The authors state that emotional engagement means employees bring a sense of hope, opportunity and positivism to the daily storms of work. A pleasant atmosphere and positive perspective set the stage for positive emotional energy. As we are social beings the connection we have with each other and ourselves is crucial. Rituals that promote positive interactions, attitude and emotions are beneficial to oneself and others around you. When difficulties arise, being able to take a time-out will provide the opportunity to decide how you want to respond to a person or situation. This can go a long way in maintaining harmonious dynamics, whether at home or work. Expressing appreciation and acknowledging others for their efforts helps build esteem and good-will. Engaging the heart is emotional energy.

Engaging the Mind: Focus

Schwartz and Loeher believe that mental engagement means employees bring focus, clear thinking and realism to the workplace. The demands for your

attention are constant – so much to do and so little time. You can get caught up in trying to do too much at one time which results in not getting anything done as you would like. Focusing on a given project cuts out the time it takes to refresh your attention. Every time you change your attention to take care of an email, add something to a different lesson plan, or visit with a colleague you will have to refresh and refocus yourself to the task at hand. Each time this occurs you will be taking more time to complete the task than initially required. This may go into the face of multi-tasking but there are indications that focused attention is both more expedient and rewarding. Engaging the head is mental energy.

Engaging the Spirit: Meaning and Purpose

In *The Power of Full Engagement*, the authors write that spiritual engagement means employees bring a sense of purpose, passion, commitment, character and integrity to work everyday. The human spirit needs attention, but you may wonder how when you have such high competing demands. Everyday life is an opportunity to attend to the spirit when what you do is consistent with what you value most; thus giving you a sense of meaning and purpose. Even with the requirements of you as a teacher it is important to remember the bigger picture – your family, the children you teach, the value of education, your colleagues. To realize the energy of human spirit you must be conscious of your priorities and make time for what matters most to you – family, work, health, friends – thus giving you the energy to attend to the other necessities in life. You also need to identify what you do best and enjoy at work, ensuring that this makes up part of your regular routines on a daily basis. The spirit energy is essential to all the rest.

Core Renewal Rituals

Renewal rituals are needed to restore high positive productivity. Having daily practices in exercise, nutrition and in sleep and relaxation for renewal are the rituals which will sustain your long-term energy reservoir. Rituals are a part of an established routine or according to Webster, "repeated acts or series of acts". Those acts which become ingrained in your daily and weekly life do not require a decision because it is part of what you do. Decide to make changes in just one or two areas at a time and be highly specific about what you will modify. Remember, small changes are better than ambitious failure.

Energy Management is a way to pay attention to your capacity for output in your life, at home and at work. Building and maintaining high levels of energy will enable you to have the satisfaction you desire in your life and for the priorities you hold dear. Start by addressing your physical routines. Get enough sleep, eat healthy, and exercise regularly. Once you have built the foundation of your energy supply turn your attention to your emotional wellspring. Take time to appreciate others and spend time with those who are important to you. Your mental energy comes from your capacity to focus on a given task and complete it. For every project you complete there is a level of satisfaction that feeds your energy. Lastly, being conscious of the meaning and purpose in your life is an overriding source that can often get you through the more difficult events in life or the menial tasks that need to be attended to. If you would like to know more about your energy levels go to www.hpinstitute.ca/assessments_free.html for a free energy assessment and access to many more resources.

Marie Wall is an EAP Coordinator with the Employee Assistance Program for teachers. For confidential assistance contact Marie Wall (ext. 265) or Claudette Coombs (ext. 242).

Gardening 101: Growing Leaders

by BEVERLEY PARK

Recently I had the privilege of attending a presentation by international educational development consultant Dr. Dean Fink on the subject of sustainable leadership. In my typical fashion of thinking in tangents as I listened, I went off on a trail of thought. Then, as inevitably happens, one thought, one phrase will bring me back. The idea which grabbed me this time was Fink's assertion that all nature is emergent – only human beings actually "design" new systems.

"Just as I have always been amazed at what can grow in a bog, so too am I amazed by those people who are the rare emergent leaders in education. After all, leadership is difficult enough when everything is working with you and for you."

The phrase was uttered in the context of how educational leadership is practised, and Fink's talk that day caused me to think more deeply of emergent leadership and leadership by design through the metaphor of nature. In Newfoundland and Labrador we are fortunate to experience nature at its best. I suspect that there's not a teacher in this province who hasn't watched a garden grow and many who have planted them. You have likely seen countless examples of how nature adapts and changes in order to sustain and preserve itself. Sometimes a new hybrid develops, something brand new and different in response to a change in the environment. And yes, sometimes the weeds take over the garden. That's the thing about nature – it is uniquely responsive.

Every elementary science fair I have ever seen has the "experiment" showing that a plant will either wither or thrive depending on the environment – the richness of the soil, the quality or quantity of light and water. Optimum conditions produce optimum results. The key is finding out what those optimum conditions are. Some plants are fussy and require delicate attention and nurturing to blossom. By contrast, some beautiful things in nature just seem to get by without much help – think daisies, lupins and irises. Leaders are like that too. Natural leadership will emerge among those who see and seize opportunities, without anyone really paying much attention at all. Just as I have always been amazed at what can grow in a bog, so too am I amazed by those people who are the rare emergent leaders in education. After all, leadership is difficult enough when everything is working with you and for you.

But what of leadership "by design"? Fink submits, and I agree, that we can actually "grow" leaders. That is, we can create the conditions for leadership to grow. We can surround people with rich learning opportunities – not just chances to do the things we don't want to do. We can make it a good thing for people to propose themselves as leaders, allowing them to step up without feeling that they are stepping on someone's toes or territory. Whether it be at the district, at school, in the classroom, or at the Association, those who are currently in the lead positions should give thought to design opportunities for leadership. What are the attitudes, aptitudes, values and vision that would have to underlie such design? For one thing, people would have to be comfortable with their own obsolescence and shift their notion of the evidence of leadership success.

Here's a quick test … for this activity imagine you are a school principal … answer with your first gut instinct:

You have a series of meetings which will take you away from school for three or four days. Would you consider yourself more successful in your leadership

role if:
(a)the place generally could not run without you and your cell phone, email, blackberry, pager (etc!) constantly buzzed as you were being consulted, asked for advice and decisions; or
(b) you come back after your absence to find that things are "normal", that the place had run smoothly in your absence – not standing still and waiting for your return but continuing to move forward.

Unlike most good questions, this one has a "right" answer.

Good leaders should be able to walk away knowing that they have left behind others who will take the lead. That may happen by chance; a good leader will ensure that it happens by design. Good leaders will have created and provided opportunities for others to hone their skills and practise leadership. They will have carefully considered how and to whom they provide such opportunities. Who do they put in charge when they leave? Is it only people of a certain age? gender? experience? Is it someone who has the same style of leadership, a clone who will do it "just the way they do"? If you are a classroom teacher, you may ask yourself similar questions about how and to whom you provide leadership opportunities within the student body.

Designing leadership decisions have to be made around both formal and informal experiences for a more diverse group to see themselves as leaders in schools, in districts, in the Association and in education in general. If emergent leadership can be linked to nature, to if and how seeds grow, then leadership by design implies that we need to plant those seeds. Perhaps we all need to become better gardeners.

Beverley Park is Senior Administrative Officer in the Professional Development Division of the NLTA.

Canada's Outstanding Principals 2008

Congratulations to James Lynch, Principal of Mobile Central High School in Mobile and Gerald Mercer, Principal of Vanier Elementary in St. John's on being named, along with 31 other principals from across the country, as Canada's Outstanding Principals for 2008.

James Lynch

James Lynch has been interested in school improvement and restructuring for his entire career. He has served in a variety of positions – teacher, department head, vice-principal and principal. He is a Covey facilitator and actively participates in professional learning both as a participant and as a system leader. He designed and maintains the school website, "by which students, parents and teachers can access valuable information on curriculum and instructional practices". He established the Teacher Mentor Program, a Peer Assistance Leadership (PAL) and Project Succeed, a remedial six-week summer program for at-risk intermediate students in grades 7, 8 and 9. As a teacher wrote, James "is a role model who exemplifies and stands by his strong belief that a school can provoke and effect change". One parent writing in support of the nomination commented, "The many projects and programs existing at Mobile are a direct result of Jim Lynch's genuine concern for all students in his care". Additionally, he is active in community affairs and serves as the President of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment Advisory Council, Director of the Signal Hill Tattoo and the Commanding Officer of 2007 RCACC, a cadet core which he formed at his high school.

Gerald Mercer

Gerald Mercer is an experienced educator and has been actively involved in all the communities that he has worked in Newfoundland and Labrador. He has "sought curriculum development challenges and opportunities". He is a writer of textbooks and resource materials, participated in many provincial initiatives including the Oxford Round Table on the Superintendency and Principalship. He uses student data to inform decision-making at Vanier. A teacher who worked with Gerry at St. Andrews Elementary School wrote how following amalgamation and provincial re-structuring, he transformed the school. "He established structures to foster ongoing participation in school decision-making .... and reflected his sensitivity to the unique needs of the school community." In his case study, Gerry detailed the plans for change at his former school that led to his success. Teachers who wrote support letters made references to 'empowerment, visibility, collegiality, responsiveness and openness' in how Gerry operates to "forge a climate of respect for all".

An initiative of The Learning Partnership, a national not-for-profit organization dedicated to championing a strong public education system in Canada, Canada's Outstanding Principals program honours the extraordinary contributions of dynamic education leaders in publicly funded schools. Principals, who have made a measurable difference in the lives of their students and their own local communities and help ensure that Canada's young people continue to receive a quality education, have been selected from across the country for the prestigious honour.

Now in its fourth year, Canada's Outstanding Principals program was developed as an endeavour between The Learning Partnership and the Canadian Association of Principals, in collaboration with the University of Toronto's Rotman School of Management. Since being launched, 90 exceptional leaders from across the country have been selected as Canada's Outstanding Principals and this year 33 principals will join their colleagues in the National Academy of Canada's Outstanding Principals.

From February 24 to 28, the 33 winning principals will participate in a five-day Executive Leadership Training Program at the prestigious University of Toronto's Rotman School of Management where they will have the opportunity to dialogue and reflect on leadership issues with other renowned leaders from the educational, social, cultural and business communities. Following these events, winners will be inducted into the National Academy of Principals and will have the opportunity to participate in a year long online forum. In addition, on February

26, the winners will be formally honoured for the contributions at a dinner in their honour, Canada's Outstanding Principals Awards Gala Celebration, which is being held in Toronto.

Teacher Wins National Technology Award

Congratulations to Norman Littlejohn of St. Francis School in Harbour Grace on being named one of five national Technology Idol winners by the Canadian Council of Technicians and Technologists.

Mr. Littlejohn is the technology teacher for Grades 6 to 9 at St. Francis School and is also director of a robotics club for students. The club has won the provincial junior robotics contest five years in a row and has traveled to Atlanta to represent Eastern Canada in world competition.

The Technology Idol contest recognizes Grades 7-11 teachers who make science and technology learning fun. Students nominate their favourite teachers who make a real difference in expanding their understanding and appreciation for technology. The contest was part of activities for National Technology Week which took place November 5-9, 2007.

Teacher Earns National Biotechnology Award

Congratulations to Holy Heart of Mary Vice Principal, Sharon Brennan, on being awarded a BIOTECanada – Biogen Idec Teaching Excellence Award for her efforts in promoting biotechnology in the classroom. Ms. Brennan, who was Science Department Head last year, was one of three national winners who earned cash awards for creativity and innovation of their teaching methods.

With limited resources, creativity, workshops, hands-on biotech activities, curriculum supplements, guest lectures, field trips, contests, partnerships and more, Sharon has introduced the world of biotech to her students and colleagues at the school. Sharon succeeded in bringing her students beyond the routine classroom textbook by introducing new activities such as DNA extraction processes, modeling chromosome maps, etc., that have helped her students participate in national biotech-based competitions. As a result of her dedication to biotech, an increasing number of her students have participated in the Sanofi-Aventis Biotalent Challenge, and Sharon herself has been recognized by receiving the Prime Minister's Awards for Teaching Excellence (2000-01).

The BIOTECanada – Biogen Idec Teaching Excellence Award is a unique national award program dedicated to promoting and recognizing teaching of biotechnology at the secondary level in Canada. It includes three annual cash awards – one for $5,000 and two for $2,500. The cash award is divided equally between the winning teacher and his/her school. Schools can use their portion to purchase scientific equipment or resource materials.

This new award program which was launched in September 2005 during National Biotechnology Week has been created to recognize educators for their creativity in the classroom, curriculum development, and for fostering awareness of biotechnology.

Norman Littlejohn

Schools Recognized for Excellence in Physical Education

Ten schools in the province are winning schools through the Recognition Award Program sponsored by the Canadian Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (CAHPERD). The program identifies, recognizes and encourages excellence in school physical education programs.

There are three award levels for the Elementary/Junior High School Recognition Award. The Diamond Level is the highest award presented to schools for an exceptional program of physical education instruction everyday of the school week. The Platinum Award is presented to schools that provide a well-planned program of physical education instruction 3 to 4 times a week. The Gold level recognizes the same level of quality as the Diamond and Platinum Awards; however, students receive less than the CAHPERD recommended physical education class time. This award is considered the "stepping stone" to the Platinum and Diamond Award.

Winners of the Platinum Award are: Cottrell's Cove Academy, Cottrell's Cove; Peacock Elementary School, Happy Valley-Goose Bay; St. James All-Grade, Lark Harbour; St. Mary's All-Grade, Mary's Harbour; and Anthony Paddon Elementary, Musgravetown. Winners of the Gold Level Award are Fitzgerald Academy, English Harbour West; Cowan Heights Elementary School, St. John's; and Macpherson Elementary School, St. John's.

The Secondary School Award is presented to schools that offer compulsory Physical Education courses that are exceptional and enhanced by intramural activities. Winners of the Secondary School Award are Jens Haven Memorial School in Nain and Crescent Collegiate in South Dildo.

Sharon Brennan

The Rules of the Game

by DAVE DYER

I'm an admitted sugar addict. I openly admit that this is my vice, my nemesis, and my true obsession. Who else do you know who would plan a trip based on the goodies available in a destination? Who do you know that orders a meal at a restaurant and insists that the dessert be served first?

I grew up in a household with five older siblings. You might say that it was survival of the fittest. I was fortunate that my mom enjoyed baking an assortment of treats on a regular basis. This was a virtual gold mine for the sugar addict in me.

The situation, however, created a sense of urgency for me to arrive home promptly after school. Who knew if this was the day that I would be greeted by the aroma of cinnamon buns as I entered the house? A person who procrastinated homewards from school would miss out on these delectable treats.

There was one thing I could rely on though. If I (or anyone in the household for that matter) bought something such as a chocolate bar, it was off limits to all others. That bar could be laid on the kitchen table for weeks and no one dared touch it no matter how hungry they were. After all, these were the household rules that were clearly defined by my parents.

When I married I foolhardily thought that these rules of the game would automatically transfer to our family household. Boy, did I learn fast!

"Honey, where is my piece of cheesecake?" I asked in a dumbfounded voice.

"Oh, I ate it," replied my better half.

I had learned that the rules I grew up with no longer applied in my new environment. I must admit that I was slow to pick up on these "new rules". It actually took me a few years to know how the newly modified game was played. Now that I know how to play… I've adjusted.

Societal Values

In our Canadian school system, educators warmly greet the children we hope to impact from Kindergarten onward. We want all students to be active learners in a safe environment and regularly do all we can to help this happen. We encourage pupils to follow particular guidelines for the well being of all involved. The school and classroom rules are a fundamental aspect of this safe and caring environment.

Do schools have the right to impose values on the children they teach? Is it the school's responsibility to expect certain behaviors from students? Keeping a child safe is indeed a major part of any provincial safe and caring school philosophy. There must be some form of order for the populace to follow.

Often, the rules in a school are laid out in a systematic and intelligent manner. Aspects of the safe school philosophy are usually stated in the school development plan, student agenda, or school mission statement. Classroom, grade level or school wide assemblies are frequently used to relay what is expected in the school to the population. Police officers are sometimes used as guest speakers to reinforce our philosophy of a safe and caring environment. Some schools even use PowerPoint presentations to communicate this information to the students.

Teachers often go over the code of conduct with their students. General points that are made by educators may consist of the following: This is a "hands off" school so please don't touch one another. Be nice to your peers. Be fair to one another. Treat one another with respect. Many teachers may have heard these lines used regularly in their teaching career. These rules, for most of us, are the fundamental foundation of our society. There is a general view that these guidelines should be obvious for all to understand.

What happens when a person's perceptions of the "school rules" are skewed from society's ethical standards? What happens if the individual is raised in an environment that doesn't align with the school rules? What happens if one doesn't grasp these concepts or recognize that they are breaking them? Whose fault is it? Can we blame the person who may not comprehend these values? Are they mistakenly branded as bad people or just misinformed?

When thinking about these questions, please consider them from the perspective of both students and adults alike. The rules of bullying apply to both the young and old. An adult doesn't automatically comprehend bullying solely by acclamation of age. One cannot determine if a person has a solid grasp of safe schools just by looking at him or her. The only thing that we might be able to surmise is that adults

and students have seen bullying take place in their lifetime whether they were aware of this or not.

Both adults and students may have witnessed, participated in, or have been the target of bullying but that doesn't mean their ordeals are the same. An adult reminiscing on their school memories, and then extrapolating these experiences to fit with the present, may not necessarily be living the complex life of today's student. Bullying is a multifaceted and evolving entity that is continuously being redefined in this computer-based twenty-first century.

Questions to Consider

What makes a safe and caring community? Do students and adults really comprehend all aspects of this vision? Do we consider this concept too obvious to address in detail? Some schools may be under the false pretense that once safe school information sessions are carried out, the work is concluded in that area. A school completing presentations or discussions on bullying should not necessarily be defined as a safe school, although it is one piece of the puzzle. A truly effective bully free school must be an ongoing endeavor that is a living entity. The educational system is responsible for instilling certain values in students but it shouldn't assume people automatically know why guidelines must be followed. After all, individual perspectives of the world vary.

The ethics taught in individual households fluctuate according to that particular family value system. Educators may thus be making assumptions about what societal standards their students really know. A student's zone of proximal development may not connect with all of the rules the school system assumes community members should know. Values as a whole are subjective. Perhaps there is a need to view the world through a variety of lenses. Students don't travel through the educational system with standardized backgrounds. The personal history of every child varies.

The current education system closely parallels the business world, as accountability is everything. Academic standards are measured and framed according to governmental grade level curricula. Provincial standardized tests provide valuable information to staff members; assisting student achievement in the years to come. This relevant information is specific to individual schools and is often shared with school board specialists, school department heads, Department of Education personnel, teachers, and students. The current system provides a fine network of support for academia to flourish.

Should the current system have a similar framework for safe schools? Can we take the criteria of what constitutes bullying and provide this information to all members of our school community in a more understandable manner? We cannot assume that this is common knowledge. Can the educational system go a step further and provide regular empathy classes for our students? With deeper understanding of bullying behavior, the child becomes accountable for their actions. When information isn't detailed, then misinformation may occur. The student may be open to making social errors in judgment that may affect their peer's self-esteem.

Small Changes Producing Big Results

School leaders often exert time and energy conversing with unhappy parents whose child may have broken the school rules. A discussion on whether this action was intentional or unintentional is usually carried out. Often times the parent may be in a defensive mode and the school philosophy on safe schools may be to blame for this. Safe school rules may be clear to educators and yet cloudy to parents and children. Sometimes the school code of conduct may not align with the way the parent raised their child.

How much easier would life be for educators if all parties explicitly had these rules of the game? Why can't schools cover the various aspects of bullying, the implications of bullying, and the repercussions of this aggressive act in more detail on a regular basis? This action could be a preventative approach that might provide safe school continuity from one grade level to the next. Students transitioning from an elementary, junior high, or high school, would clearly understand these school rules because it is a part of the school culture.

A standardized provincial-wide set of bullying definitions may help teachers and school leaders identify if students are deliberately breaking the rules. If there is true clarity of what bullying is, then perhaps this understanding will minimize its occurrence. This knowledge might refocus students who sincerely don't want their actions to be bullying ones. What better method of creating a partnership in our community than having this open 'living' policy? The rules of the game and what's expected from all parties become a natural process. We might discover that the student behaviors may change as bullying is often a result of misunderstandings. These actions might lead to the direction of students, parents, and educators understanding misunderstandings.

Dave Dyer is a language arts teacher at St. Kevin's Junior High in Goulds, NL and has been actively involved in safe schools since 1999. He has a Masters of Education from Memorial University where he spent much time researching bullying. Feel free to contact Dave at daviddyer@esdn.

Adversity Is Inevitable

by GEORGE TUCKER

During my childhood, it was an annual ritual for my mother to spruce up our house for Christmas by doing extensive cleaning and painting. The improvements really weren't necessary as our home was always neat, trim and tidy as a pin. Yet, dear Mom always felt the need to engage in her home improvements before Christmas and again in the spring. My spouse also has a Mom cast from the same mold. Thus, it must have been this imprinting that triggered the idea for some painting and home improvements in our home. So, for a couple of months before Christmas, our place was in a state of disrepair and upheaval. Unlike our energetic and courageous mothers who did the work themselves and so were always in control as they bit off only what they could chew, we, being extremely busy at work, decided to secure the services of professional painters and trades persons.

Now as you are probably aware, contractors have a different perspective on getting the job done. They are motivated by efficiency and purpose. Time is money and they want to get the job completed as quickly as possible without compromising on quality. Unlike mothers who invariably tackled one task or room at a time, our contractors wanted/needed to access all rooms at once so that they could stick to their schedule. So for the months leading up to Christmas, it was a daily ritual to move furniture and other belongings from one spot to another. Only narrow pathways allowed us to maneuver about the house. A refurbishing of the kitchen meant that we did not have cupboards or a kitchen sink for several weeks. Delays caused by over-taxed contractors, a sink that arrived in two pieces and a missing faucet nut meant that we were still struggling to put our place back in shape in the days leading up to Christmas. Then, the long awaited day when the job was finished finally arrived (December 22, a Saturday) and we could call our house our haven once again. We were thoroughly enjoying the tranquility of our surroundings and some time at home when the pump in our artesian well died. No pump… no water! To say that panic set in would be an understatement. Under different circumstances the problem could be quickly resolved. This, however, was winter, a weekend and only a couple of days before Christmas. Who could or would come to our aid?

To make a long and complex story short and palatable, suffice it to say here that a wonderful contractor with a backhoe tractor came by and excavated a large two-metre deep hole in the backyard so that the pump repairmen could work their magic. The well was excavated on the Sunday. The four pump guys, including an electrician, worked their magic on the Monday so that by 2:00 p.m. on Christmas Eve we had a whole new water pump system. We were never so relieved or happy to write a cheque for a fabulous job done by dedicated and skilled professionals. Based on our experience of having to purchase and carry water for a few days to meet all our needs, never again will we under-value the luxury of having running water at our finger tips.

Now, this situation may not qualify as adversity for many people who are dealing with health issues and other matters involving life and death. However for me, it proved once again that adversity happens in life. It invades all our lives from time to time and we learn, as the old saying goes, "that if it doesn't kill us that it'll make us stronger". Just as taxes and death are inevitable, so too I believe, it is a safe bet that all of us will have to deal with adversity as we live our lives. If this is indeed the case, then is it not important that we all learn to accept the bad as well as the good and to simply learn to have confidence in our ability to resolve unpleasant issues or setbacks and move forward? Mark Twain once penned that "we spend most of our lives worrying about things that never happen". It's human nature that we often think the worst and inflate situations unnecessarily. The secret is to accept that adversity is a natural part of life. Thus, we need to embrace it and learn to grow from it. Experience reminds us that 'this too shall pass'. The sun will rise tomorrow and life goes on with or without a pump! This time we were afforded a happy ending. Next time, and there will definitely be a next time, the end result may be different. But the experience of recent days will hopefully bring a degree of comfort and confidence that things will work out no matter how grave they appear initially. And, we did have a beautiful Christmas after all!

To all of you, my teaching and administrator colleagues throughout Newfoundland and Labrador, remember as you embark on another school term that you will face challenges in your classroom as well as in your private lives. Yet as seasoned educators understand, know that there are ebbs and flows in your work too. Nurture the resolve to work through the difficult times and ensure to celebrate and cherish the good times. Best wishes to all of you for a healthy, prosperous and Happy New Year.

George Tucker is an Administrative Officer in the Professional Development Division of the NLTA.

RESEARCH

A Study on Abuse/Violence Experienced by Teachers in NL

How Safe Are Our Teachers?

by DR. LYNDA YOUNGHUSBAND

In 2001 I began doctoral studies to research high school teachers' experiences of stress in their workplace. From that qualitative study a picture emerged of teachers who were overloaded and bombarded with massive changes and unrealistic time demands, leaving them feeling overwhelmed, helpless and powerless, exhausted and disillusioned. Feeling that they had almost no authority outside the classroom and very little inside, these teachers were left feeling at the bottom of the totem pole. One particular area in which more administrative guidance, direction, and support was desired was discipline. In general, the perception was that abuse toward teachers was becoming more prevalent and the fear of violence a greater concern. Yet participants felt there was little insight into teachers' problems in this respect and no recommendations about ways to resolve them.

Despite several laws and policies which address teachers' rights to be treated with respect and to work in an environment free from harassment and abuse, there appears to be serious problems within the education system in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was four fold: a) to determine the level of abuse and/or violence experienced by teachers in NL; b) to determine the nature of the abuse/violence experienced by teachers in NL; c) to explore the personal impact of abuse/violence experienced by teachers in NL; and d) to determine whether teachers in NL feel safe in their workplace.

Methodology

This was a quantitative/qualitative study providing complimentary methods to examine the problem of abuse and violence experienced by teachers. The question needing to be answered was "How Safe are Our Teachers?" In response to a notice about the proposed study in *The Bulletin*, teachers contacted me with a willingness to be interviewed. Face-to-face interviews of 60-90 minutes were conducted with 23 teacher participants over the course of six months. The interviews were audio taped and transcribed. I also met with a focus group of eight female teachers from across the island, all enrolled in graduate courses, Faculty of Education, Memorial University. They ranged in age from 29-43 and taught grades K-12.

The original survey was designed in 1999 by Lyon and Douglas at Simon Fraser University to assess the level of abuse and violence directed toward teachers in British Columbia. The authors agreed to my use of the instrument for this present study. I shortened the questionnaire and added two open-ended questions. Violence was defined as "any threatened, attempted, or actual harm to a person or persons." Behaviour that would induce fear also falls into this category. Abuse was defined as "maltreatment, to be verbally insulted, to be the recipient of harsh, coarse, or foul language, or language which implies attack." The survey instrument was comprised of six main sections: Demographics, Incidence of Violence/Abuse, Reporting Incidents of Violence/Abuse, Policies addressing Violence/Abuse, Identifying Risks and Preventing Future Violence/Abuse.

Data collection and Analysis

There are 5,634 teachers in Newfoundland and Labrador. Mail out surveys can be problematic because they have a tendency to produce low response rates. To overcome the potential for a low return rate, 1,000 questionnaires were randomly distributed to teachers from K-12 using the mailing list from the Department of Education. Recipients were advised that the survey was voluntary and confidential.

Three hundred questionnaires were returned for a return rate of 30%. The average age of the respondents was 41.6 years, which is slightly under the average age of teachers in the province (46.7 years), meaning that older teachers are slightly under represented in this survey. The average teaching certificate was Level 6, which corresponds with the provincial average, and the number of years taught was 16.8, which compares favourably with the provincial aver-

age of 15.2. Sixty-seven point seven percent of the respondents were female, 32.3% male as compared to the NLTA averages of 64.7% and 35.5% respectively. Over 64 percent of the respondents teach in rural schools and 35.8% in urban schools. One hundred and eleven teachers stated that they teach at primary/elementary level, 59 at junior high, and 75 at senior high. That does not total 300 but of the 57 who indicated that they teach at an all grade school, not all noted at which grade level they taught. As well, 10 respondents did not indicate any grade level.

Of the 300 returned surveys, 292 were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Three of the remaining eight surveys were returned too late for statistical analysis but the written comments were analyzed. One survey was submitted by a speech pathologist and four were not adequately completed. One hundred and ninety-nine respondents were classroom teachers, 40 were special education teachers, 1 was a resource librarian, 8 were teaching principals, 13 were teaching vice-principals and 3 were department heads. The remaining participants indicated 'other' without being specific. One hundred and eighty four (62.2%) respondents answered the open-ended questions and the majority of those added further comments.

Results

It is not possible in the limited space here to include all the results; therefore, only some of the quantitative results are presented at this time. Further to this, more results, both quantitative and qualitative, will be discussed in a later issue of *The Bulletin*. However, Table 1 below indicates the number of teachers who answered "yes" over the span of their career to each of the 12 categories of abuse/violence.

Table 1: Number of teachers who answered yes to "Have you ever experienced:"

Categories of abusive/violent behaviour	%	%
1. Personal insults, name calling (includes letters, notes, phone calls, e-mail).	72.3%	67.5% female
2. Rude or obscene gestures intended to offend, insult, or intimidate you.	65.4%	64.4% female
3. Chronic activities tolerable on their own but in total intended to intimidate.	43.9%	66.9% female
4. Behaviour or conduct you believe was intended to make you fearful or intimidated.	66.7%	67.8% female
5. Personal property damage.	30.6%	58.5% female
6. Threatened physical violence without a weapon.	41.8%	56.9% female
7. Threatened physical violence with a weapon.	11.4%	65.6% female
8. Attempted physical violence without a weapon.	26.1%	69.4% female
9. Attempted physical violence with a weapon.	7.9%	61.9% female
10. Actual physical violence without a weapon.	22.1%	80.6% female
11. Actual physical violence with a weapon.	4.3%	66.7% female
12. Threatened, attempted, or actual violence directed against a member of your family.	11.8%	75% female

Table 2 represents victim-perpetrator relationships. The majority of perpetrators in all categories were students. Parents were the next largest group of perpetrators and together, students and parents contributed heavily to the covert types of abuse (categories 1 through 4). The survey did not ask participants to indicate where the abuse and/or violence occurred most frequently. However, teachers interviewed reported that most incidents occurred in the classroom but that school corridors and school grounds were often the scene of abuse/violence as well. Abusive phone calls were received at home by many of the respondents on both the surveys and in the interviews.

Table 2: Victim - Perpetrator Relationships (Percentage)

	Students	Parents	Students & Parents	Administrators
Category 1	37.5	14.5	37.0	
Category 2	71.8	6.6	16.0	
Category 3	45.8	14.2	17.5	8.3
Category 4	40.8	15.2	18.5	8.2
Category 5	91.9	41.0		
Category 6	79.5	10.7	9.8	
Category 7	77.4	16.1	6.5	
Category 8	85.5	10.1	4.3	
Category 9	95.0	5.0		
Category 10	93.3	6.7		
Category 11	100.0			
Category 12	76.7	13.3		

Discussion

This qualitative/quantitative study expands upon my previous research from 2000 and 2005, which documented job stress as a major concern for teachers in NL. While there has been considerable movement toward a safe schools initiative, the emphasis has been on safety for students. Scant attention has been paid to the safety of teachers. Considering the frequency and levels of abuse/violence reported in this study, the question arises as to why, apparently, so little is done to alleviate the situation. One teacher stated that teachers did not report abuse "because no matter what, it's the teacher's fault." Some students regularly threaten and assault teachers with few, if any, consequences. Why is a teacher's account of the action not accepted? How does the victim somehow become seen as the possible catalyst? Teachers need a risk-free work environment in which to teach and students need the same environment in which to learn. No one should have to experience the debilitating and corrosive effects of abuse/violence. This issue needs to be addressed.

Note

Space does not permit the full report here but a discussion of the interviews and teachers' comments on the survey will be addressed in another edition of *The Bulletin*. The report in its entirety can be accessed by contacting Lynda at lyounghu@mun.ca.

Dr. Lynda Younghusband is a former community health nurse, teacher, school guidance counsellor for 13 years, and university lecturer. She is presently a counsellor and Assistant Professor at Memorial University Counselling Centre. Lynda's doctoral thesis, "High School Teachers' Perceptions of Their Working Environment", won a national award and her work has been featured nationally on W5.

Funny You Should Ask!

Do you have a humorous story, joke or anecdote about your life as a teacher that you would like to share with readers? This could be something that occurred in the classroom, overheard comments from students or teachers, or just a funny incident that happened to you while at school. We would love to print it in *The Bulletin*. If selected to be printed we will send you an NLTA gift package.

All submissions should be in good taste and may be edited for content.

Please forward submissions to:
Lesley-Ann Browne
Editor, *The Bulletin*
labrowne@nlta.nl.ca

Correction
Recent Pension Amendments

In the December 2007 issue of *The Bulletin*, it was incorrectly reported that the 65 day limit that a retired teacher was allowed to substitute in a school year had been deleted from legislation, with the result being no limit on the number of days a retired teacher can substitute. **This is incorrect and the 65 day limit still exists**.

While Section 25 of the Pensions Act on Re-employment After Normal Retirement Age was deleted, Section 24 – Re-employment Before Normal Retirement Age was amended to become Section 24 – Re-Employment, and the 65 day limit was maintained.

We apologize for any confusion caused by this error in reporting. The NLTA will continue to pursue the removal of the 65 day limit that a retired teacher can substitute in a school year.

SHARING OUR CULTURES...
A LA DÉCOUVERTE DE NOS CULTURES
March 16-18, 2008
Delta Hotel, St. John's. Sharing our Cultures...À la Découverte de Nos Cultures is an educational and multicultural event showcasing more than 25 countries and cultures of students in our schools. Theme: *Handicrafts of Our World*. Sunday, March 16 – Official opening for the public. Monday, March 17 and Tuesday, March 18 – for students Grades 4-6. Two sessions each day, either 9:15 - 11:00 a.m. or 12:15 - 2:00 p.m. Space is limited. Classes will be accepted on a first come, first served basis. For more information or to book your visit, please contact the event co-ordinator, Lloydetta Quaicoe, quaicoe@gmail.com.

CANADIAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE PRACTICAL STUDY OF LAW IN EDUCATION (CAPSLE) ANNUAL CONFERENCE
April 20-22, 2008
Halifax, NS. Theme: *Educational Leadership Today and Tomorrow: The Law as Friend or Foe*. Further information: www.capsle.ca.

ARTS WORK III CONFERENCE
April 24-25, 2008
Gander. For further information contact Krista Vokey, kvokey@gov.nl.ca.

SEXUAL & REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH CONFERENCE
May 12-14, 2008
Holiday Inn, St. John's. The official speaking line-up for the first provincial conference on sexual and reproductive health has been announced. Over 20 speakers presenting on topics relevant to our provincial health care professionals – an excellent personal and professional development conference for nurses, physicians, social workers, pyschologists, teachers and administrators. Topics of note include the internet and sex, deviance and sexual health, fertility treatment, sexual exploitation, maternity needs of immigrant women and much more. For further information contact karen.m@Nlsexualhealthcentre.org or call 709.579.1009 for additional conference information.

CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF PRINCIPALS NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2008
May 14-16, 2008
Delta Conference Centre, St. John's. Featuring speakers Dr. Avis Glaze: *Leadership Imperatives for Canadian School Administrators*; Barry MacDonald: *Mentoring Boys for Success at School*; Gwynne Dyer: *Changing Canadian Demographics and the Implications for Educational Leaders*; Alfie Kohn: *Testing and Grading and Homework – But Why? Rethinking Traditional Practices in Education*. A host of educators from our own province will offer a variety of interesting and informative concurrent sessions. For further information visit the conference website at www.cap2008.ca.

NUTRITION INSTITUTE
July 7-9, 2008
Location: TBA. Hosted by the Department of Education. The focus of the three-day institute is on skill development for teachers who work in a food laboratory environment. Priority will be given to teachers of Nutrition 2102/3102. Expressions of interest should be directed to ellencoady@gov.nl.ca.

ATLANTIC CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF SCIENCE EDUCATORS (ACASE) AGM AND CONFERENCE
July 10-12, 2008
St. Mary's University, Halifax. Theme: *Science Engages "Energy"!* For further information go to www.acase.ca or contact Craig White, craigwhite@gov.nl.ca, Tel: 709-729-2614.

Dates to Remember

March 2008

Mar 2-8	Education Week
Mar 20	**Deadline:** Professional Development Fund applications
Mar 31	**Board Deadline:** Notice for retirement at end of school year
Mar 31	**Deadline:** Centennial Study Award Applications
Mar 31	**Deadline:** (on or before March 31): International Conference Presenters Program Applications

April 2008

Apr 1	**Deadline:** Johnson Bursary Applications
Apr 3	NLTA Executive Meeting
Apr 4-5	Joint Council Meeting
Apr 15	**Deadline:** Notice of postponement of Deferred Salary Leave or withdrawal from DSLP
Apr 30	**Deadline:** Deferred Salary Leave Applications
Apr 30	**Deadline:** Year-end resignation from contract

May 2008

May 7	**Deadline:** Notification by Board of layoff
May 11-17	Branch Election Week
May 15	**Deadline:** Professional Development Fund applications

June 2008

June 6-7	NLTA Executive Meeting
June 15	**Deadline:** Notification by board of acceptance/rejection of Deferred Salary Leave requests
June 19	**Deadline:** Professional Development Fund applications

July 2008

July 31	**Deadline:** NLTA Scholarship Applications